

REMARKS

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 5, 10 and 16 are cancelled without prejudice. Claims 1, 6, 11 and 15 are amended. No new matter is being presented, and approval and entry are respectfully requested. Claims 1, 4, 6, 9, 11-15 are pending and under consideration. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

The claim amendments are supported by the originally filed specification, for example, FIG. 6, S120-S140, and description from page 11, line 26 to page 14, line 17 of the specification.

CLAIM REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. §102:

In the Office Action, at pages 2-3, numbered paragraphs 4 and 5, claim 16 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 in view of Krouse et al. (U.S. 6,097,834).

Claim 16 is cancelled herewith which renders this rejection moot.

CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103:

In the Office Action, at pages 3-5, numbered paragraphs 6-7, claims 1, 4-6, 9-11, 13 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,097,834 to Krouse et al. (hereinafter "Krouse") and U.S. Patent No. 6,385,595 to Kolling et al. ("Kolling"). The reasons for the rejection are set forth in the Office Action and therefore not repeated. The rejection is traversed and reconsideration is requested.

Krouse discloses a recognition method of document format by scanning a document for generating a scanned image of at least a portion of said document containing said visual representation (col. 12, lines 38-62), generating an image characteristic which includes positions of OCR line and document shape (col. 14, lines 17- 63) and comparing the image characteristic with reference characteristics in the database archive system 228 (col. 14, line 64- col. 15, line 67) to determine the document format.

Krouse fails to disclose or suggest searching for the payee account number in the image data at an unknown position in accordance with an account number searching rule, and determining a type of the form based on the payee account number from a document information table that stores account numbers correlated with types of the form, as recited in claim 1.

On page 4, lines 3-5 of the OA , the Examiner states that a user could physically search the different invoice types to locate the account numbers at an unknown position since the searching is not tied to a processor or computer instructions. However, since claim 1 now recites

"searching for hyphens in **the image data**" and claim 6 now specifies that the processing unit searches for the payee account number in the image data, the Examiner's broad interpretation is precluded.

Krouse also fails to disclose or suggest that said account number searching rule comprises:

searching for hyphens in the image data;

judging whether or not an arrangement of the searched hyphens is a specified hyphen arrangement;

character-recognizing the image data in areas surrounding the searched hyphens which are judged to be in the specified hyphen arrangement; and

determining whether or not the result of the character recognition matches a specific account number regularly,

as recited in claim 1.

Kolling teaches a universal biller file, which is a database of biller information and includes a record for each biller in the system, and that biller information includes an account mask for account number format which includes hyphens (col. 14, lines 43-67).

However, Kolling fails to disclose or suggest that said account number searching rule, as recited in claim 1.

In view of the above discussion, amended independent claim 6 patentably distinguishes over the cited prior art at least by reciting:

said processing unit searches for hyphens in the image data, judges whether or not an arrangement of the searched hyphens is a specified hyphen arrangement, character- recognizes-the image data in areas surrounding the searched hyphens which are judged to have the specified hyphen arrangement, and determines whether or not a result of the character recognition matches a specific account number regularly.

Amended independent claim 15 patentably distinguishes over the cited prior art at least by reciting:

said searching and determining of the account number comprises:

judging whether or not an arrangement of the searched hyphens is a specified hyphen arrangement;

character- recognizing the image data in areas surrounding the searched hyphens which are judged to be in the specified hyphen

arrangement; and

determining whether or not the result of the character recognition matches a specific account number regularity.

Claims 4, 9, 11, 12 and 14 are also patentable at least by inheriting patentable features from claim 1 from which these claim depend. Claim 13 is also patentable at least by inheriting patentable features from claim 6 from which claim 13 depends.

At least for the above reasons, the rejection is traversed and reconsideration is requested.

In the Office Action, at page 6, numbered paragraph 8, claims 12 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as allegedly obvious over Krouse, Kolling and U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0073060 Geisel et al. ("Geisel"). The reasons for the rejection are set forth in the Office Action and therefore not repeated. The rejection is traversed and reconsideration is requested.

Claims 12 and 14 depend indirectly from claim 1. Geisel does not correct or compensate for the above-identified failure of Krouse and Kolling to render obvious all the features of amended claim 1. Therefore, the rejection of claims 12 and 14 is traversed and reconsideration is requested.

CONCLUSION:

In accordance with the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that all outstanding objections and rejections have been overcome and/or rendered moot. And further, that all pending claims patentably distinguish over the prior art. Thus, there being no further outstanding objections or rejections, the application is submitted as being in condition for allowance which action is earnestly solicited.

If the Examiner has any remaining issues to be addressed, it is believed that prosecution can be expedited by the Examiner contacting the undersigned attorney for a telephone interview to discuss resolution of such issues.

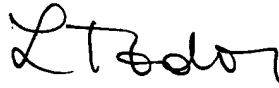
Serial No. 09/767,842

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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